

## REMARKS

The applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of the application and request reexamination and reconsideration of the application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

As a preliminary matter, the applicants note that the Examiner states that the cited *Horvitz et al.* reference, U.S. Pat. Publ. No. 2003/0046421, includes provisional patent application Ser. No. 60/255,016. On page 12 of the Office Action the Examiner maintains that "provisional application 60/255,016 includes the written description, drawings, and claims that adequately support the full scope of the subject matter regarded as the invention and claimed in the later filed US non-provisional application 10/021,621 (US 2003/0046421)" to *Horvitz et al.* The applicants respectfully request that the Examiner articulate specifically where provisional application Ser. No. 60/255,016 provides support for each the Examiner's rejections based on U.S. Pat. Publ. No. 2003/0046421 to *Horvitz et al.*

The Examiner rejects claims 1-11, 13-24, 26 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. App. Publ. 2003/0046421 to *Horvitz et al.* The Examiner also rejects claims 12, 25, 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Horvitz et al.* in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,832,245 to *Isaacs et al.* The Examiner further rejects claims 12, 25, 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Horvitz et al.* in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,578,025 to *Pollack et al.*

The goals and purposes, structure and functionality of *Horvitz et al.* are fundamentally different than the applicants' claimed invention.

The applicants' claimed invention recognizes that communication patterns between and among individuals and groups can be objectively determined and analyzed in order to ascertain the quality of human interactions that form the culture of a particular group. This information can then be used to target interpersonal problem areas (e.g. between pairs of particular individuals in the group) and thus, in aggregate, improve the overall group culture, which drives the responsiveness, productivity and innovation of the group.

See applicants' specification at page 7, lines 14-19.

To objectively analyze communication patterns between and among individuals and groups, and thus target problem areas for improvement, the applicants' claimed invention characterizes the relationships in the social network, e.g. by use of pattern and purpose information to characterize the nature and quality of the relationships between network members. See e.g. the applicants' specification at page 2, line 16 through page 3, line 4. With this characterization information, improvements in communications and productivity between and among members of a social network can be achieved.

In sharp contrast to the applicants' claimed invention, *Horvitz et al.* teaches only classification of incoming messages received by a single user and the relative importance of the incoming messages to that single recipient, in order to prioritize such incoming messages according to a learned importance to that user/recipient. See e.g. *Horvitz et al.* Abstract. *Horvitz et al.* does not teach monitoring or determining the status of dialogue and patterns and purposes of messages as claimed by the applicants.

Thus, the applicants traverse the Examiner's rejections, but have amended the independent claims for clarification and to advance prosecution.

The applicants' amended claim 1 recites a method of characterizing relationships among members of a social network including receiving a plurality of messages communicated during a dialogue between members of a social network, and determining a purpose for each of the messages. The method includes determining the status of the dialogue and updating the dialogue status as the dialogue progresses, determining at least one pattern in the messages communicated during the dialogue, and characterizing the relationships among the members of the social network based on the pattern and purposes of the messages and the dialogue status.

Given the goals and purposes of *Horvitz et al.* it is no surprise that in contrast to the applicants' independent claim 1, *Horvitz et al.* fails to teach or suggest: (a) determining the status of the dialogue between members of a social network; (b) updating the dialogue status as the dialogue progresses; or (c) characterizing relationships among members based on the pattern and purposes of the messages and the dialogue status.

Also, applicants' amended independent claim 15 recites a system for characterizing relationships among members of a social network which includes, among other things, a primitive-dialogue selection process to determine a status of the dialogue and update the dialogue status as the dialogue progresses. A group-performance process characterizes the relationships among the members of the social network based on the pattern and purposes of the messages and the dialogue status.

Thus it is clear that *Horvitz et al.* teaches goals, purposes, structure and function which are in sharp contrast to those of the applicants' as claimed in independent claims 1 and 15. *Horvitz et al.* teaches a goal of prioritization of incoming messages, without dialogue between members, or determination of dialogue status, or updating dialogue status. *Horvitz et al.* does not characterize

relationships among members based on patterns and purposes of messages, or the status of dialogue between members.

Accordingly, *Horvitz et al.* fails to teach or suggest each and every element of applicants' claims 1 and 15, and these claims are in condition for allowance. Claims 2-14 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, and claims 16-27 depend directly or indirectly from claim 15, and thus are in condition for allowance for at least the foregoing reasons. Claims 28 and 29 have been cancelled.

The dependent claims are in condition for allowance for additional reasons as well. For example, claim 10 recites the method further comprising the step of classifying an outcome for each of the messages as one of a favorable, unfavorable, and neutral type. See e.g. the applicants' specification at page 15, line 21 through page 16, line 6. Claim 11 recites assigning a score to each of the members based at least in part on an outcome determined for each of the messages transmitted by that member. Claim 12 recites, among other things, incrementing the score in response to favorable outcomes, and claim 13 recites assigning a score based on outcomes during a plurality of dialogs. See e.g. applicants' specification at page 16, lines 6-22.

In sharp contrast, the messages taught by *Horvitz et al.* have no outcomes which can be classified, or from which scores can be determined, because *Horvitz et al.* fails to teach dialogues or dialogue progression. Moreover, *Horvitz et al.* does not teach favorable, unfavorable or neutral classification, but instead teaches only degrees of priority of incoming messages, e.g. high, normal or low.

Accordingly, dependent claims 10-13 (and dependent claims 24-26) are in condition for allowance for these additional reasons.


### CONCLUSION

Accordingly, each of the applicants' claims 1-27 are in condition for allowance.

Each of the Examiner's rejections has been addressed or traversed. It is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

If for any reason this Response is found to be incomplete, or if at any time it appears that a telephone conference with counsel would help advance prosecution, please telephone the undersigned or his associates, collect in Waltham, Massachusetts at (781) 890-5678.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Thompson", written over a horizontal line.

Thomas E. Thompson, Jr.  
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TET/ok